

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) An absorbent article, comprising:
at least one active additive which produces an acid, and
a visual indicator that indicates an activity status of the active additive.
2. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1,
wherein the visual indicator changes colour in response to a change in pH or a
change in the moisture content of the absorbent article as a result of the activity
status of the active additive.
3. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1,
wherein the visual indicator is comprised of methyl red, methyl violet, methyl orange,
bromocresol lilac, Acid Blue 80, blue dye Calcocid Blud 2G, ethyl red, bromophenol
blue, or bromocresol green.
4. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1,
wherein the active additive is a micro-organism.
5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the visual indicator is placed on one of the uppermost layers of the absorbent product; and the visual indicator can be detected on a surface of the product.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the absorbent article is one of a diaper, a panty liner, an incontinence protector, a napkin, and a tampon.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the active additive is an acid producing micro-organism.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the active additive is a lactobacillus.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the active additive is a lactobacillus of the strain lactobacillus plantarum LB 931 (DSM No. 41918).

Claims 12.-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The absorbent article according to Claim 1, wherein the visual indicator is comprised of methyl orange, methyl red, or methyl violet.

16. A method of detecting an activity status of an active additive on an absorbent article after the absorbent article has been stored, comprising the steps of:
including in the absorbent article a visual indicator that provides a visual indication of the activity status of the active additive; ~~and~~
storing the absorbent article; and
monitoring the visual indicator for ~~the~~ any change in activity status caused by storing.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the absorbent article is one of a diaper, a panty liner, an incontinence protector, a napkin, and a tampon.

18. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the visual indicator changes colour in response to a change in pH or a change in the moisture content of the absorbent article as a result of the activity status of the active additive.

19. (New) The absorbent article according to Claim 16, wherein the visual indicator is comprised of methyl red, methyl violet, methyl orange, bromocresol lilac, Acid Blue 80, blue dye Calcocid Blud 2G, ethyl red, bromophenol blue, or bromocresol green.

20. (New) The absorbent article according to Claim 16, wherein the active additive is a micro-organism.

21. (New) The absorbent article according to Claim 16, wherein the active additive is an acid producing micro-organism.

22. (New) The absorbent article according to Claim 16, wherein the active additive is a lactobacillus.

23. (New) The absorbent article according to Claim 1, further comprising a package in which the absorbent article is stored together with the visual indicator such that the visual indicator can be observed from outside the package.